City of Lafayette Staff Report

For:	City Council
By:	Leah C. Greenblat, Transportation Planner
Date Written:	May 5, 2008
Meeting Date:	May 12, 2008
Subject:	Request to Address Sight Distance at the Driveway Serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard (Starbuck's)

Introduction/Discussion

Staff prepared a report, attached, for the Circulation Commission when it recently reviewed sight distance issues at the new Starbuck's at 3343 Mt. Diablo Blvd. During the development review process for the new Starbuck's the subject space was deemed questionable due to possible sight distance issues. At the time, the Commission chose to monitor its operation to see if the location became a problem before taking action.

Following a complaint after a recent vehicle collision, staff elected to bring the matter back to the Commission for further review. The Commission met on April 7, 2008, minutes attached, and discussed the impacts of eliminating the one on-street parking space. The Commission voted 5-2 (Holit and Ross opposed) to recommend that the City Council prohibit parking in front of #3343 between the Starbuck's driveway and the 7-11 driveway further to the west by designating the subject space as No Parking Anytime.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal. The cost of installing signage to designate the parking space as a No Parking Anytime zone can be accommodated within the City's existing Streets Maintenance budget.

Recommendation

1. Adopt Resolution No. 2008-026

Attachments

1. Resolution No. 2008-026
2. April 1, 2008 Circulation Commission staff report
3. Excerpt of April 7, 2008 Circulation Commission meeting minutes

c:\users\lgreenblat\documents\leah's work files\circulation commission\reports to council\2008\mt diablo 3342 (starbucks) sight distance-no prkg.doc

BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAFAYETTE

In the matter of:

Designating a No Parking, Anytime Zone	)	
On the South Side of Mt. Diablo Blvd. for	)	
One On-Street Parking Space west of the	)	
Driveway Serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Blvd.	)	Resolution No. 2008–026

WHEREAS, staff and the Circulation Commission reviewed the sight distance, parking and circulation issues in the area around 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard (Starbuck's);

WHEREAS, site conditions create a situation of limited sight distance for drivers exiting the property's driveway when vehicles are parked on the south side of the street in the space immediately west of the driveway;

WHEREAS, the Circulation Commission wants to improve the sight distance and recommends establishing a No Parking Anytime zone on the south side of Mt. Diablo Boulevard from the driveway serving the subject property extending westward approximately equivalent to one on-street parking space; and

WHEREAS, the City Council reviewed the sight distance, parking and circulation issues in the area near the driveway of 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard;

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Lafayette, California RESOLVES to designate the south side of Mt. Diablo Boulevard from the west side of the driveway serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard extending westward for approximately 25 feet; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the above parking restriction become effective once posted or otherwise designated and then the Police Services Department is directed to enforce these new parking regulations.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Lafayette at a regular meeting of said Council on May 12, 2008 by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

APPROVED: ATTEST:

MAYOR Mike Anderson CITY CLERK Joanne Robbins

City of Lafayette Staff Report

For:	Circulation Commission
By:	Leah C. Greenblat, Transportation Planner
Date Written:	April 1, 2008
Meeting Date:	April 7, 2008
Subject:	Request to Address Sight Distance at the Driveway Serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard (Starbuck's)

Introduction / Discussion

In August of 2005, in association with Starbuck's development application, staff considered the removal of an on-street parking space adjacent to and west of the driveway serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard. At that time, while sight distance was a concern, the collision history did not indicate a problematic situation. Staff did not believe the situation was egregious enough to justify the removal of an on-street parking space in the downtown commercial zone, where merchants continue to assert that parking is at a premium. Staff agreed to monitor the location once the proposed business began operation.

The driveways serving both the Starbuck's and the 7-11 (next door) are frequently used by vehicles entering and exiting these businesses. The on-street parking spaces are also frequently used by patrons. When vehicles are parked in the subject spaces, sight distance from the Starbuck's driveway can become obstructed at times, depending on the size and position of the parked vehicle. Drivers tend to have two reactions to the situation. Some may wait an extended time for an adequate view of on-coming traffic; thus impeding the circulation within the private parking lot. Other drivers may become frustrated and take more risky actions to facilitate leaving the driveway.

Staff recently received complaints about sight distance at the driveway following a recent collision, correspondence attached. Consultant Traffic Engineer Chuck DeLeuw and staff have re-evaluated the location and now recommend designating the one parking space adjacent to and west of the Starbuck's driveway as a No Parking Anytime zone. Staff further recommends continued monitoring of the on-street parking and driveways further to the west at the 7-11 property.

Fiscal Impact

Minor. The cost of designating the parking space as a No Parking Anytime zone can be accommodated within the City's existing Streets Maintenance budget.

Recommendation

1. Forward a recommendation to the City Council to prohibit parking adjacent to the west side of the driveway serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

Attachments

1. Email from Alison Hill
2. Fax from Nick Wilhelm

Greenblat, Leah

From: Greenblat, Leah
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2008 11:21 AM
To: 'AlisonRHill@comcast.net'
Subject: RE: Accident on Mt. Diablo Blvd

Dear Ms. Hill,

Thank you for your email and taking the time to share your experience. I am very sorry to hear about your collision and thankful no one was injured. I will ask the City's consulting traffic engineer to review the two locations you noted. Based on his evaluation, I will have a better sense of how the City needs to proceed with these matters. Our review may take several weeks, but I will let you know its outcome. Feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Leah Greenblat
Transportation Planner
City of Lafayette
925.299.3229

From: AlisonRHill@comcast.net [mailto:AlisonRHill@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2008 5:16 PM
To: Greenblat, Leah
Cc: e.poling@fehrandpeers.com; dandlhiden@comcast.net
Subject: Accident on Mt. Diablo Blvd

Leah,

I am writing to you, as my comments probably need to go to the Circulation Commission. I would appreciate it if you could direct my email to the appropriate person or Commission - thank you.

I was involved in an accident on Mt. Diablo Blvd on Monday, February 18. As my car is an older one it is probably totaled, which is a big nuisance, although I am still awaiting confirmation of this from the slow moving insurance company.

I was driving east on Mt. Diablo Blvd, when a 4X4 truck exiting the Starbuck's parking lot (across from the fire station) crashed into me. The reason given by the driver, true but unacceptable, was that her vision was blocked by a UPS truck parked on Mt. Diablo Blvd to the left of the Starbuck's driveway. Firemen from the Fire Station, Police Officer Vu and the other officer who came to the scene can confirm the situation. Both vehicles were totally incapacitated and had to be towed from the scene. Fortunately no one was injured.

I suggest that that section of curb be designated parking only for low vehicles (if that is possible), or painted red so that there is no parking. Both 711 and Starbucks generate a considerable amount of traffic, and it is important the vehicles exiting those lots have a clear view of oncoming traffic.

I have another suggestion. When turning left from Mt. Diablo Blvd onto Second Street (by MacDonalds) there is often a hazard from cars, or worse still trucks or vans, parked very close to that corner. There needs to be a red zone there comparable to the one across Second Street, outside the Philly Cheese Steak place, to prevent parking so close to the corner.

I would appreciate your conisderation of and response to these requests.
Thank you.

Alison Hill
932 Hawthorn Drive
925-283-6696
Lafayette Parks, Trails and Recration Commissioner

Nick's Exclusive Mercedes Service
3360 Mt. Diablo Boulevard
Lafayette, CA 94549
Fax: 925 283-1258
Phone: 925 283-5233

F A C S I M I L E **Number of Pages: 1**

DATE: March 14, 2008

TO: **Ms. Leah Greenblat** **FAX #: 284-3169**
Transportation Planner
City of Lafayette

FROM: Nick Wilhelm
Owner
Nick's Exclusive Service

SUBJECT: **Request to Address Sight Distance at the Driveway Serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard (Starbucks)**

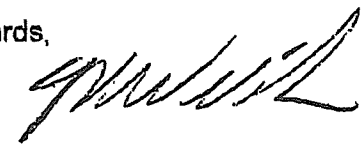
Dear Ms. Greenblat;

My staff and I are in complete agreement with the City prohibiting parking adjacent to the west side of the driveway serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

Each of us has had near misses when pulling out of that driveway to go west on Mt. Diablo to our shop.

Thank you for asking for our opinion.

Regards,



Commissioner Poling concurred with Commissioner Holit. This is an arterial but that does not mean it has to be 45 or 55 mph. While the road connects to the trail and schools, there is no evidence to reduce the speed to 35 mph. She supports a reduction to 40 mph.

Commissioner Sevilla disagrees with using the light at Condit as a means to reduce speed. She loves the improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. This is a straight road with no parking and they have posted the speed limit at the 85th percentile. She would like to see the stop light at Condit activated by the side streets and not regulate the speed of the traffic on Pleasant Hill Road. They need to set speed limits and design traffic that does not make scofflaws. She feels the Condit signal has made people law breakers by rolling through the red light.

Commissioner Hiden suggested putting the timing of the signal at Condit on a future agenda.

Ms. Greenblat said after receiving a stack of material on timing issues for the signal, the Commission had decided not to take any action.

Commissioner Hiden supports the reduction in the speed limit.

Vice Chair Hughes asked about information on ticketing for speeding along this road.

Ms. Greenblat said the City does not have the ability to track tickets.

Commissioner Wood agrees with Mr. Mitchell about the light at Condit. She feels if the speed limit is reduced, people will not adhere to it. She could also see people fighting speeding tickets in court if the speed limit were lowered. This would waste the time of the few City police officers as she feels it could not be supported in court. She appreciates the input of neighbors in the area but does not support a reduction.

Chair Ross agrees with the reduction and thinks this is what a majority of the residents want. If people are presently driving under the posted speed limit, then he feels they would continue to do so if the speed limit were posted at 40 mph.

Commissioner Hiden moved and Commissioner Holit seconded approval of staff's recommendation to forward a recommendation to City Council to lower the posted speed limit on Pleasant Hill Road south of Old Tunnel Road to 40 mph. The motion was approved by a 4-3 vote with Vice Chair Hughes and Commissioners Sevilla and Wood opposed.

Ms. Greenblat said that this would go to Council and would not be re-noticed. The public can track Council's agenda online or email Ms. Greenblat to find out when this will be agendized.

Commissioner Wood asked for a rationale on the quick red of the stop light at Condit.

Ms. Greenblat said since this was a long straight shot, they wanted it resting on red. If the signal is malfunctioning, then staff will have it checked out.

6. New Business

a. Request to Address Sight Distance at the Driveway Serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Boulevard (Starbucks)

Ms. Greenblat said the Circulation Commission reviewed a development application for Starbucks, and at that time Mr. DeLeuw had some concerns about the sight distance coming in and out of the driveway. Because of concern with losing an off-street parking space, staff agreed to monitor the driveway location. The City received a request to address sight distance issues after an accident occurred at that location.

Staff is requesting that one parking space west of Starbucks' driveway (3343 Mt. Diablo Blvd.) be designated a "no parking at any time" zone.

Chair Ross opened the meeting to public comment on this item.

Alison Hill said she was driving east on Mt. Diablo on February 18 and had stopped at the Shell Station. A UPS truck was parked in that spot. A car came out of Starbucks and hit her. Both cars were totaled and had to be towed away. This is a dangerous situation and requested the Commission restrict parking at this location.

Chair Ross closed the public comment period on this item.

Commissioner Hiden moved and Commissioner Poling seconded approval of staff's recommendation to forward a recommendation to City Council to prohibit parking adjacent to the west side of the driveway serving 3343 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Commissioner Poling supports this recommendation and while there are many such locations in the City, there is a lot of in and out traffic due to Starbucks and the 7/11 next door.

Commissioner Wood agreed with staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Holit said this was a problem throughout downtown and not unusual. He does not feel it is unusual enough to eliminate parking.

Vice Chair Hughes said he has come close to being clipped many times at this location. Traffic eastbound moves at a fairly high rate of speed and it is difficult to see coming out of that driveway. He would support the no parking zone.

Chair Ross said he doesn't see why they should remove parking and set a precedent along Mt. Diablo. There is a high volume of traffic at 7/11 and people need to be careful. He is opposed to the recommendation.

Mr. DeLeuw said it was different at this location with the two driveways at 7/11 and Starbucks very close to each other. Exiting and turning right onto Mt. Diablo is difficult and feels this is a worthwhile recommendation.

The motion was approved by a 5-2 vote with Chair Ross and Commissioner Holit opposed.

7. Consent Calendar

a. Minutes of February 19, 2008

Commissioner Poling moved and Commissioner Wood seconded approval of the minutes of the February 19, 2008 Circulation Commission as submitted. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

8. Staff Reports

a. Update on Recent Council Actions

Ms. Greenblat reported that the City received an award from the County Advisory on Aging Transportation Group for the senior transportation program (Spirit van). Council authorized staff to find potential sites for off-street parking for redevelopment including cost and terms. At the March 10 meeting, Council heard an old business item on the Stanley-Springbrook traffic program and allocated